



APA-TECH 75

October 1991



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APA Policies:

- Minac (Minimum level of activities required) is two somethings per year.
- Issues will be mailed the first week of even-numbered months, so contributions must reach me by the first day of said even-numbered months. Things which reach me late will be held until the next scheduled mailing.
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GEOGRAPHY IS WHERE ITS AT

Bonnie Jones
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Dear friends, sorry it has been so long since I wrote, but I have lots of excuses. I have been working on the last (?) draft of my thesis. I did defend it successfully, thank you. I also had a sore wrist for about two months, which put me off my bicycle, and put on five pounds which I easily lost when I started riding again.

Work has been keeping me extremely busy, with the world changing every day. I have spent the last three weeks updating our atlas to reflect the Soviet changes, and I have had to remake composites twice in one week. Along with making the Baltic republics independent, two cities changed their names; Leningrad became St. Petersburg and Sverdlovsk is now Yekaterinburg. We also decided to add the other republics to our Europe, Asia and Middle East maps, and then Byelorussia changed its name to Byelarus. The new name is 'white Russia' in the local language instead of Russian. They also changed their flag, etc. I'm just keeping my fingers crossed that nothing else changes before we send it to the printers. We are updating our maps as they come up for reprint, but we have had to shelve the new products until things settle down. We haven't caught up with the new products since we had to unite Germany and Yemen last year!

Since Audrey did such a nice write up of the Berzker, I don't have much to add, except a few of us went copper hunting with a metal detector on the old tailing piles. These piles are huge, like fifty feet tall. Tullio Proni spent most of the weekend copper hunting, which I don't think Amy enjoyed as much as he did, considering they were on their honeymoon. Also, I got to be part of the first rocket recovery team at the Wicker farm. The rocket went into the second stand of trees, just past the border of the farm. The rocket has a beacon which beeps so that we could locate it easier. Using walkie-talkies, Jo Gehm and I relayed messages between the farm and the group in the woods who found the rocket 50 feet up in a tree. Guy's father took the chain saw . . . The rocket was eventually brought back only to be launched again.

Sam and I attended Worldcon. Since we didn't have to commute, this was the first Worldcon I could bring all the clothes I wanted to so I could dress up each day. I had a hall costume of 'Bonnie Jones - Indy's little sister' but the weapons policy forbid any kind of weapons including whips so I didn't wear it. However, at the dance, I did see two Indiana Joneses and they both were wearing whips discretely.

The convention certainly offered enough to keep anyone as busy as they wanted to be. I attended the panels that my friends were on, but even there I had some conflicts. My favorite panel was 'How to maim your characters right'. I learned a lot about physical injury in that one.

Moebius Theater presented R.U.R., the play which I had heard about for years and wanted to see. Written in the 1920's (I don't remember the author) it has the first appearance of the word 'ROBOT' and has robots taking over the world. Rather depressing and melodramatic.

The highlight of the convention for me was the formal dinner I arranged for Sunday evening, before the Hugos. It was a small dinner party, including the Van Dorns, the Ropers, the Gehms, Bill Higgins, Ruth Ann Nickels, Sam Paris and myself. The ladies all wore floor length gowns and the men were in suits, except for Bill Roper who wore his tux. Gretchen Van Dorn even got a compliment on the dress she had made from a lady who owns a dress shop. We dined at Bigg's, located in an old mansion about a mile north of the hotel.

One night a large group of us (16) went to the Goose Island Tavern and Brewery for dinner. We took the elevated train (like a subway except above ground) which I think was the most interesting part of the evening for some. The Brewery actually makes its own beer, which we sampled.

Sunday night, after the Hugo Awards, we got to see a dry ice demonstration in a fountain at the hotel. I understand that at the last Chicago Worldcon when this happened the hotel called the cops, this time it was uneventful. The dry ice had been bought from the ice cream shop in the hotel complex.

Advertisement: I am a charter member of the improvisational group Space Time Theater. For the past two years we performed at Confusion. This year, due to con politics (don't ask), we will be performing at Conclave. Be there.

I have a challenge! The new novel Fallen Angels by Niven, Pournelle, and Flynn is about fans and for fans. I am trying to compile a list of all the SF books, short stories and anything else fannish referred to in the book. I would appreciate any help I can get. Thanks!

Note to editor: I would like to see credits for the covers. The cover for #74 looks like the title screen from the software program PCGLOBE.

CRUMBCRUNCHERS, INC.

P.O. Box 98

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September 1991

Howdy everyone!

Life moves on apace. School has started again (thank heaven!) and Marlene is in second grade, which she has decided is "more fun" than first grade (even though they have one less recess!). She still has problems with being "talky", though she says to me that this is because she's in a "talky group"! She's in the top reading group, and brings home lots of extra reading. Her handwriting is definitely NOT neat, and she often brings home papers with C- and grades like that on them. They'll be starting to learn how to write script after Christmas - this will be really interesting when her printing writing is still so untidy!

I find myself confronted with a problem that's probably perennial with mothers - what to pack for lunch. Some days most of the food comes home untouched, and other days it's all gone. (However, this isn't necessarily an indication that she's eaten the food, as considerable "trading" goes on among classmates - I've observed this when I've accompanied kids on field trips!) I honored a request for carrot sticks, only to be told a few days later that she hated carrots sticks because "everybody calls me Bugs Bunny." Carrot-raisin salad (grated carrots with raisins) was a hit for a few days, but is now rejected because "it's too strong." (Things with distinctive flavors are either "too strong" or "too tasty.")

Dora's still cruising, though she'll walk while hanging onto somebody's legs. She can balance herself without hanging on for a few seconds, but will invariably lose her balance and sit down soon. She scuttles around rapidly on hands and knees, and has learned how to climb steps. Her favorite game is to scramble up the steps to the bedroom, conceal herself, and scurry out of hiding when somebody comes looking for her. (She'll usually reveal herself with little shrieks of laughter when she hears somebody calling her name.)

So far, she hasn't managed to seriously injure herself, though heaven knows how! She always has bruises on her forehead from taking tumbles - the most recent from falling off the dining room table. (She's learned how to climb out of her high chair, and must be watched constantly lest she perform this trick. You can imagine how stressful eating out can be. But since we can't afford to eat out often, this isn't much of a problem. Maybe by the time we can once again enjoy this pleasure, she'll have learned to stay seated.)

She'll come out with what sound like words occasionally, although I'm sure they're experimental sounds that just seem to be words. (Words will start to show up soon, though, and I'm curious to see if the first one is related to food, as I've read is frequently the case! MR's first word was "dog" and it wasn't even a dog that prompted it, but this HUGE orange cat

who stalks around town and seems to father a good portion of the kittens in our neighborhood.) She definitely understands things that are said to her, though - most notably "What do you have in your mouth?" When asked this, she immediately reaches in her mouth and fishes out whatever she has in there, and hands it to me. I just now was given a pinball token and a dime! Sometimes, though, it's something like a piece of apple she's been working on for half an hour or so.

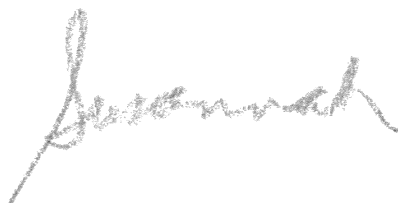
The Ohio Tobacco Festival has come and gone. For the first time in years we didn't participate in this event, since we were attending Dave's fifteenth high school reunion. We missed the banquet, of course, due to being late, but Dave caught up with his classmates who attended. (And why were we late? Well....As always, we have complex and unnecessary adventures - this time we got lost in Newark, Ohio looking for Dave's sister's house. This is a town we're supposedly very familiar with, but we got lost anyway. Meanwhile, Dora and Marlene both got carsick, so when we finally found the house, we very hastily had to clean up two sad-faced, slimy kids, apologizing all the time. Anybody have any carsickness remedies? I seem to be stuck with two little ones who have this problem, and never having been prone to carsickness myself, I don't know any solutions that really work!)

After studying Zen for a couple years, Dave has finally had the opportunity to attend a sesshin (an intensive three-or-four-day lecture conducted by a Zen master). The master (who also is a Jesuit priest) will be conducting another sesshin in May, so I imagine Dave will want to attend it also. It was held at a resident camp near Cincinnati called Grailville - a very interesting place with Catholic and feminist overtones. The Grail movement was started in the Netherlands back in the 20s by a group of Catholic women who wanted to provide education and support for women. There are now apparently Grail centers all over the world. Dave really enjoyed the time he spent with others interested in Zen, and got a kick out of the fact that it was a "silent retreat" but everyone tried to come up with all sorts of ways to "legally" talk. He liked the vegetarian meals also.

PBS updates: as you may (or may not) have noticed, that intriguing computer game "Where in the World is Carmen Sandiego" is now a PBS kid's game show. We haven't seen it yet, as it premieres September 30. "Mathnet" has a new character; Kate Monday has been replaced by Pat Tuesday. The George Frankly character seems to be getting progressively more intelligent, though he still pulls some real boners occasionally!

Hope to have room for some mailing comments next time, that is if I can keep from mislaying the copies of the APA!

Be well and happy!

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Savannah". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left.

So what's new? On August 17 I took my vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, ending my novitiate and beginning my life as a vowed brother in the Society of Jesus.

Yes, it was very much like getting married.

Why in God's name did you do a thing like that? Between taking vows, and seeing at vow day old friends (some going back to earliest childhood), I had plenty of time to look around at my life and ask myself the golden question (*a la* the Talking Heads)—How Did I Get Here?

It's related in a way to a question I first asked nine years ago, on my 30th birthday, a man who'd had all his debts paid, all his education completed, no strings, no responsibilities, no health or family or money problems: Guy, you can do anything in the world that you want; so what do you want to do?

When I'd asked that question in 1982, I'd wound up joining the Peace Corps. That was a very, very good move on my part. I managed to confront all the things I was scared of (new places, insecurities, living without lots of stuff) and I also met a bunch of other volunteers who were people just like me.

Coming back from Africa, I took a teaching job at Lafayette College, and I loved it, but... Life is more than just work, isn't it? Out of the 80 people I trained with, there were I think 10 marriages. Going to one of those weddings, I asked myself if I was really interested in getting married myself. I had (and still have) a great Peace Corps friend out in California, Brooke Smith, and I realized it wouldn't take much for me to talk myself into being in love with her.

But that's when I realized that, if I'd really wanted that, if that was really the most important thing in my life, I'd have been working a lot harder in trying to date appropriate women. Instead, I was always more into the "interesting" (i.e. weird and unstable) types than the "settle down and have a life" types. I really didn't want to get married. There were too many other things that were more important—like teaching, or writing books. Or doing good for people. I had done some really, up front, "do good for people" things in Africa. I missed that. And even when I was just teaching physics, by being a Peace Corps volunteer I was standing for something bigger than the glory of myself or the reputation of some small pretentious eastern college. I missed that. I missed the missionary brothers who'd dedicated their lives to teaching in Africa. And that's when it finally clicked, when I realized that I wanted to be a religious brother. A Jesuit.

Uh, excuse me for asking, but...what's a Jesuit? Some people have never heard of us, others have only heard all the bad things. Most people know of us from the schools we run (like Boston College and Holy Cross and Georgetown). For a romanticized version of our good side, you should rent a movie called *The Mission*, which is based (somewhat) on historical fact.

We are sometimes known as the "intellectuals of the Church". Lots of famous scientists in the 17th and 18th centuries were Jesuits. They came up with the modern calendar, for instance. Christopher Clavius (after whom the lunar crater is named) was the mathematician who introduced things like the plus and minus sign, and the decimal point, to Europe; he supported Galileo during his fight with the church.

We also have a reputation for being both the church's "storm troopers" and "radicals" by our enemies on the left and right. Former congressman Robert Drinan is a Jesuit; when he was in Congress he led the fight to impeach Nixon, and he resigned his seat when the Pope told all priests to get out of politics, so the right hates him for being leftist and the left hates him for obeying the Pope!

So, are you getting ordained, or what? Most Jesuits eventually do get ordained (we have a longer than usual period of study, so it takes about 12 years) but for myself, I am a brother, not a priest. I will not be ordained, or preach on Sundays, or do any sort of overtly "ministerial" functions. But I live as a Jesuit; I took the same vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience last month, and I am living now in a community of Jesuits. (It's like living in a commune, only without the sex and drugs!)

Yeah, what are these vows all about, anyway? *Poverty*: I own nothing, though I am allowed to use whatever tools I need to do my work (hence they let me keep my computer, and will even pay to upgrade it as needed). *Chastity*:

*You may ask
yourself:*

Where
is that
large
automobile?

*an Apa-Tech Zine by
Bro. Guy Consolmagno SJ
1331 W. Albion Ave.
Chicago, IL 60626*

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no marriage, no family, no sex. That way, I will be completely free to go wherever I am sent and do whatever I need to do. *Obedience*: I go where they tell me. (But in practice, I work it out with my superiors where I should go.)

(Incidentally, speaking of poverty, I gave away my stereo and record & CD collection to Brooke. Giving up my stereo really taught me the idea of poverty! So, two months after I entered, she met this guy who loved her—read, my—record collection! And he's 38, has a beard, is a scientist, is a former Peace Corps volunteer... the only major difference between him and me is that there was chemistry between him and Brooke that she and I never really had. They've been together for two years now... we'll see.)

So now what? I've been in training for two years, and I have two more years of studies to go. In the future, I expect that either I'll be teaching physics in one of our colleges—I spent a term teaching at Loyola College in Baltimore last spring, as an "experiment", and it worked out very well—or possibly I might be assigned to work for the Vatican Observatory, which has offices in Rome and telescopes in Arizona.

It's been a while since you were in the APA; what have you been up to for the last couple of years? I was in the Novitiate for the past two years. It was not trivial. I had to live in tough situations (North Philadelphia, the Bronx, and Dorchester, a Boston slum) and I had to do some difficult work (for instance, in a cancer hospital in New York and a workshop for the mentally handicapped in Pennsylvania). Some days I came home exhilarated; other days, exhausted. But through it all I have felt like I was where I belonged. I felt like finally I was in a home, in a family of Jesuits who could understand me and accept me and use the things I had to offer. It's been great.

Seriously...for you, what do you get out of all this? The life style is good for me; I've never wanted lots of material things, but I have always wanted to opportunity to develop my intellectual talents. I love teaching, I love learning. I am an intellectual, for better or worse. So I have a roof over my head and food on the table, and the opportunity to do the things I love. But of course, it's more than that.

I am living among other intellectuals. There are 14 men in this house; all of us, including the four other students, have advanced degrees of some sort. We include an architect, a couple of lawyers, a mathematician, an engineer, several psychologists, several members of the theology faculty... I would guess about half the residents are published authors, writing books on various topics right now. The dinner table conversation is incredible!

But the best (and most essential part) of this life to me is that it is religious; and I am one of those people who really enjoys religion. I certainly can see all the problems in the church. After all, I have to live with them full time, day after day; there are as many dumb things said and done in the name of religion as there are in any other human field of endeavor. But, as TS Eliot puts it...

... *Why should men love the Church?*
Why should they love her laws?
She tells them of life and death, and all they would forget.
She is tender where they would be hard,
and hard where they like to be soft.
She tells them of Evil and Sin, and other unpleasant facts.
They constantly try to escape
from the darkness outside and within
by dreaming of systems so perfect
that no one will need to be good.
But the man that is, will shadow
The man that pretends to be...

Tell me more about your situation right now. I'm living in a place called Ignatius House, one of four Jesuit communities at the Lakeshore Campus of Loyola University. I'm on the 4th (and top) floor of a building built in the late 1930's as a convent for St. Ignatius Church and Grade School, which is right next door. We're two blocks from school, a very easy walk but a wonderful (and necessary) buffer from the campus. It's also only one block from the Loyola El station. The neighborhood is very eclectic, a hodgepodge of every ethnic group and income class you could imagine; winos and BMW's living side by side. The houses remind me a lot of the east side of Detroit, sort of late-1920's small but elegant style; but there are also lots of big old apartment houses, sort

of like Brookline (a suburb of Boston) or the nice part of the Bronx, north of Fordham. The lake is only three blocks away (and there's a beach right at the end of Albion St.) so we get cooled by lake breezes. I went swimming soon after arriving, and it felt wonderful to be back in the Great Lakes again.

(An aside to all the Detroiters in this zine... say hello to my old home. I grew up in Harper Woods and Birmingham—as a kid I used to ride my bike to the Cranbrook Science Museum all the time. I went to the Jesuit high school in Detroit, U of D High, and later worked for the Lapeer County Press as a summer intern, reporter and photographer, back when Jim Fitzgerald, the *Free Press* columnist, was the editor. After high school, my parents moved to Port Sanilac, on the Lake Huron shore; they stayed there until the late 70's, when my dad retired from Chrysler and they moved to Florida. By then I was out of grad school and doing apost-doc at Harvard.)

I have two rooms here, a bedroom and an office, with a doorway between them. My Africa photographs are up on the wall, and the computer is set up. I even scrounged a modem, and got on the mainframe, so I can send electronic mail to my various correspondents worldwide. I now feel like I've moved in.

My classes include Issues in Metaphysics (Aristotle, Kant, and Heidegger), Hinduism, and a history seminar on Galileo... all stuff I've always wished I knew something about. I've also been accepted into the "returning scholar program" at the University of Chicago and when their term starts, October 1, I'll start the graduate level Quantum Mechanics sequence in the physics department (an essential physics course that I managed never to take when I was in school). So between Quantum and Hinduism, I may be able to speak intelligently to anyone who claims there's a connection between modern physics and eastern mysticism!

It should all keep me busy enough; but in addition, the Jesuit "pre-Regents" here (which is what they call us students) are all expected to put in 10 hours a week in some sort of ministry. I'll also be doing that down at U of Chicago, according to the present plans...organizing graduate student support groups, and weekend retreats.

All work and no play? The first week of September I had a visit from Cliff Stoll, the astronomer/computer guy who is an old friend from grad school. (I hope you've all read *The Cuckoo's Egg* by now.) He was around for the World Science Fiction convention here in Chicago, to sell his book. Since the at-the-door fee was \$150 I did not intend to attend, but I told Cliff, "keep an eye out for a guy named Bill Higgins..."

Cliff replied, "He's the guy who invited me!"

Between the two of them, they got me in, for free, and got me on a panel with Cliff about "what's wrong with NASA". Interesting times...

Should I be diplomatic, or honest? What the hell.

After 4 hours at Worldcon, I have decided: Fans are very strange, sick, sad people. I know; I used to be one. I remembered vividly going to Toronto in 1973, the worldcon in Washington in '74, several Boskones and Noreascon in the late 70's. I don't remember being as pathetically geeky as a lot of the people I saw in Chicago; but I suspect I was. It was actually rather sad. To me the ultimate image was that, among the costumed attendees, were several dressed up as monks. Well, here I am doing it for real! And reality is a whole lot more satisfying, and fun. But maybe they're afraid to make the commitment. I was an SCA monk for many years, myself, so I do not speak without knowledge.

Pathetic geeks, huh? Not only am I talking about many of my friends in this APA, I am talking about myself. But let me be specific It's not enough to say "geek"; that's simply an insult, not an honest description.

The thing which worries me about Fans are several specific character traits which worry me when I see them in myself:

- *A failure of self-identity.* If your status in life, and your sense of self-worth, derives primarily from what Big Name Fans you have known (or been), then I think we'd all agree you're in trouble. (And how much of my bragging about Cliff Stoll comes from the fact that he really was one of my closest friends in grad school, and how much because he's now reached a minor notoriety and I

want to bask in his reflected glory, such as it is?)

- *A failure to communicate.* I had several conversations with fans, some whom I've known for years, others who I met for the first time. One common (though not universal, thank God) trait was the feeling that I was being talked at, not talked to. I am thinking not just of the L-5 True Believers who buttonholed me after the panel, but also old friends from MIT who I also ran into. They clearly didn't respond to anything I was saying, so intent were they on saying their own piece. (But notice how I have no mailing comments in this 'zine?)

- *A failure to accept responsibility.* Self pity is an addiction. I am really tired of hearing from unemployed fans who quit their last job because "everybody there was a real bozo, I could have told them how to do their job right but they never listened to me, so the hell with them. But the world is unfair, because no one wants to hire a genius like me!" If you really learn to listen to what other people are trying to say, instead of looking for an excuse to disagree, you'll find that the vast majority of human beings—including bosses—are not bozos. They're people just like you, indeed just as smart as you, who have families and hobbies and mortgages and health problems and frustrations just like yours. Shut up and listen! (And I said that by being a brother, I wasn't going to preach. Ha!)

Are all fans like this? If I thought so, I wouldn't be in an APA, would I? But I suspect we can all think of people we know who fit these descriptions; more, I suspect we all have fit them ourselves at one time or another. We hate most in others the faults we see in ourselves (to quote a cliché).

Fantasy/Science Fiction is Good, as any act of creation is good; further, it is good for us, as it helps us see reality in a different light. For instance, as a teenager I had always rather reluctantly believed in Christianity, but the Narnia books and Tolkien made me see it, and life, as an exciting adventure; it's much more fun for me now. We generally encounter SF in our teens, and it helps us strip away our infantile childhood views of patriotism or religion, which is necessary if we're to make room for a more mature understanding of these subjects. And it teaches us that our understanding must never stop growing.

Fandom is dangerous, however, if it causes our own creativity to atrophy, by replacing our own dreams with ready-made substitutes. Think of the people who live in the Star Trek world because it is a simpler and less demanding than real life. Then it becomes itself just another shallow fundamentalist religion, a poor substitute for the views it stripped away. (And, like any religion, you always have to worry about the "in-group" mentality, the "we glorious few" feeling that prevents people from admitting their own shortcomings and reaching out to the rest of the human race.)

Change the subject! Brag about your books! Thought you'd never ask. *Turn Left at Orion* is getting very nice word-of-mouth, and excellent reviews. The Astronomy Book Club has featured it in their "Member's Choice Catalog", and several astronomy club newsletters have plugged it. Orion Telescopes sells it in their catalog, and they claim they have trouble keeping it in stock. All this means that we've sold maybe 2000 copies, not overwhelming but not bad. The publisher, however, is not particularly good about getting the book into bookstores. Oh, well. Have I gotten rich off it? My advance just barely paid our expenses in producing the book, and the first royalty check went straight to the Jesuits... but my coauthor, Dan Davis, used his check to travel to Mexico City for the eclipse!

And, meanwhile, I keep writing things. There's an old friend from MIT, Martha Schaefer, who's been writing a planetary science textbook with me; Prentice Hall has shown serious interest. I have various scientific papers in the works (about the properties of ammonia ice on the outer moons of Uranus, and how tidal forces have caused cracks in those moons, and how electromagnetic forces sculpt the dust rings of those planets... all fascinating stuff, at least to me!)

And in my spare time I have started writing murder mysteries novels! I have one done, another is about a quarter finished so far. (Anyone with a Mac who wants to sample it, send me a blank disk. The completed novel is 400K long, and it's written in Write Now, which I will include on the disk, so send an 800 K disk.) No, I have no plans to get them published; for one thing, they probably aren't good enough yet. But I just enjoy writing them.

AS CORRUPT AS GORGONZOLA

an APA-TECH zine by Barry Gehm

As corrupt as gorgonzola: that's what I discovered my disk was when I sat down several days ago to write my zine on the Mac at work. Evil veins of bit rot had worked their way through the tree structure, causing the loss of two folders and their contents, including my resume and various correspondence. I can't blame this accident for the loss of my contribution, because I hadn't gotten anything written yet, but as a result, the time I had planned to devote to writing for Apa-Tech was spent trying to recover my lost files with Norton Utilities. In consequence, this submission, if it makes it into the apa at all, will be short.

As you may have inferred from the comment above about my resume, I am job hunting. This doesn't mean I'm now unemployed; my postdoctoral position at U. of C. is good until at least March, but it was never intended to be a permanent position, and I've been looking seriously for a "real" job for several months now. Unfortunately, the Chicago area is not exactly the center of the US biochemical industry, and private sector jobs for PhD biochemists don't seem to be terribly abundant. So far, I've been limiting my search to the Chicago area, since my wife Jo has a good job here that she likes, and we have many friends in the area that we would hate to leave. However, if something doesn't turn up in a few more months, we may have to cast the net wider.

The obligatory Chicon report: The 1991 Worldcon was held here in Chicago, as I guess you all know. My part in it was pretty minor, at least compared to some of my friends'. I was on three panels:

"The Abuse of Biology in SF", "My Favorite Science Books: Cross-wired Scientists", and "Mamas Don't Let Your Babies Grow Up to Be Scientists." Bill Higgins was running the science programming track, which may have had something to do with my being on the panels. I had a good time, and most of the panelists and audience members seemed to as well, so I suppose they were successful panels. I'm afraid I dragged David R. Palmer out for another drubbing during the "Abuse of Biology" panel. He's a sweet old guy, and I hate to do it, but Emergence is too good a bad example to pass up.

I also went to some programming apart from my own panels, although I missed Cliff (Cuckoo's Egg) Stoll's talk, which I understand was a real rouser. I should have stuck around after I delivered his chocolate milk. Todd Johnson chaired a panel, nominally on basement tinkering, that turned into a panel on how to get back at neighbors who screw up your reception with their radio equipment, play their stereo or TV too loud, etc. After about 20 minutes of this, Todd took the sign that had the name of the panel and changed it to "Home ECM", which got a laugh from the cognoscenti.

In addition to all that, there was of course the pleasure of seeing lots of techies and other friends who live far away. I
/(i.e. GT's)
also got to meet one of our British members, Dermot Dobson, who is a lot of fun and full of great techie stories, especially in the department of strong magnetic fields (he works on magnetic resonance imaging.) It was also fun to watch him dealing with some of the tricky hidden differences between British and American English.

And Guy Wicker, God Bless him, revived a grand old GT tradition by throwing dry ice in the hotel lobby fountain and shining lasers

through the fog. It's 2:30 am & time to put this and me to bed. More
next time I hope. Bye!

--BG



At the last possible second . . .

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Celebrate — It's our 75th Issue!

It seems fitting to celebrate APA-Tech's 75th issue with another landmark: Dr. Science recently produced his 2,000th episode of "Ask Dr. Science."

For those of you who somehow managed to avoid exposure to "Ask Dr. Science," this is a 90-second radio parody of scientific experts which runs Monday through Friday on National Public Radio stations across the country. Here in Detroit, we get it twice a day, at 7:30 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. during "Morning Edition."

Dr. Science is portrayed by Dan Coffey, a man with a Master's degree in playwriting. For nine years, he has been writing and performing the show. And, until July, it was free. Now, stations that run "Ask Dr. Science" have to pay for it — between \$1 and \$1.50 a day.

Gabe and I have been listening to Dr. Science since college, back when he was Mr. Science. Now, since I work in an office with a lot of electronic equipment and very poor reception, Gabe calls me each morning and puts the telephone near his clock-radio so we can listen to Dr. Science.

Also, when we can get a copy of it, we can read Dr. Science in Orbit, which is one of Detroit's two new weekly alternative newspapers. Orbit is really good; it has a fresh, enthusiastic voice, and doesn't take itself too seriously. Just when The Metro Times got stuff, Orbit appeared. Now if only it was as easy to find...

Anyway, below is one of my favorite Ask Dr. Science columns:

.....
Ask Dr. Science!

Dear Dr. Science:

What is the last thing to go through an insect's mind before it smashes into your car windshield?

*—Theodore H. Chapin,
Hummels Wharf, Penn.*

By a remarkable coincidence, science has recently shed light on this problem. After a long and diligent search, science located a number of psychic insects. We duct-taped these telepathic six-legged creatures to a '62 Studebaker. Then we drove through Wyoming

in August at 100 miles an hour. Tiny instruments picked up the final thoughts of so-called "normal" insects as they smashed into the windshield. A reported 23% of these final thoughts were "Uh-oh." Another 25% were "Oops," followed by 15% that were simply "Car!" The remainder of these thoughts were a hodge-podge including, "Hungry," "Tired," "Woh! Big and Shiny," and "Hey watch where you're going."

—Orbit / 09.05.91

Meanwhile

The last two months have been really rough on me. As you all couldn't help but notice from Gabe's last contribution, I was pretty sick during the Houghton Berzerker. Then it was only a few weeks later that I was sick at Worldcon (Chicon V). Between the two I started skipping my exercise program (I just wasn't up to it), and now I'm out of the habit and *still* not feeling well. Today

it's another bout with bronchitis — and I thought that this year I'd be able to go through allergy season without it. So, at 3:15 this afternoon, I will be going off to visit Mr. Doctor. I hope that soon I will be completely well and back doing my exercise.

Chicon V was a blast, even with not feeling well. I took in a lot of the programming, particularly those panels involving computers, hacking, bulletin boards, and/or the law. The panels with Mike Godwin of the EFF, and Steve Jackson of Steve Jackson Games were particularly good, and the panel with Cliff Stoll of the Cuckoo's Egg was outstanding.

Since Chicon, I've been trying to read my way through CuD (Computer Underground Digest), which is an electronic newsletter available on various BBSes (Gabe handles getting these things for me, since as co-sysop, I am pretty lame). At any rate CuD has spent a lot of time discussing those same topics which interest the EFF (Electronic Frontier Foundation), namely the rights of computer users and government regulation/investigation/prosecution/persecution. There are three years of files I want to go through, and some of them are long and dry, so it's no wonder I'm still on the first year. So far topics covered have been the 911-related case against Phrack publisher Craig Neidorf, the persecution of Steve Jackson, discussions of the Cuckoo's Egg (which was almost universally disliked by CuD contributing authors (an opinion with which I wholeheartedly disagree)), and general information on bad hackers and their motivation. The whole thing is quite interesting, and if anyone

is interested in it, let me know and I'll see to it that the CuD files are available for downloading on our BBS.

Also, after this month's submission is a general document about the EFF, which talks a little about their mission and concludes with a registration form. I would suggest becoming a member. The EFF is trying to make sure that the laws passed about computer use are sensible and fair. The courts (and congress) don't really understand computers, so many of the laws which they have worked on are too broad and end up reducing the computer owner/operator's rights as a side-effect. If you use a computer and want to help protect your freedom, join. Gabe and I did.

THE ELECTRONIC FRONTIER FOUNDATION

General Information

EFF MISSION STATEMENT — April, 1990

A new world is arising in the vast web of digital, electronic media which connect us. Computer-based communication media like electronic mail and computer conferencing are becoming the basis of new forms of community. These communities without a single, fixed geographical location comprise the first settlements on an electronic frontier.

While well-established legal principles and cultural norms give structure and coherence to uses of conventional media like newspapers, books, and telephones, the new digital media do not so easily fit into existing frameworks. Conflicts come about as the law struggles to define its application in a context where fundamental notions of speech, property, and place take profoundly new forms. People sense both the promise and the threat inherent in new computer and communications technologies, even as they struggle to master or simply cope with them in the workplace and the home.

The Electronic Frontier Foundation has been established to civilize the electronic frontier; to make it useful and beneficial not just to a technical elite, but to everyone; and to do this in keeping with our society's highest traditions of the free and open flow of information and communication.

A LOOK BACK — June, 1991

That was our mission statement when we began the EFF little more than a year ago. In the past year we have worked hard to fulfil this mission.

When we began there was a void separating the pioneers of computer networking and the rest of the world. The technologies were ill understood outside of a small, technically minded part of the population. One of our first tasks was to begin to build bridges between these groups.

In our first year The Electronic Frontier Foundation has:

- Inspired and helped to organize and present the first Computer Freedom and Privacy Conference. CFP was a four day event that brought together, in search of knowledge and common ground, representatives from computer networking, law enforcement, and privacy advocate groups.
- Worked within Senator Leahy's Privacy Task Force in Washington, D.C. in order to advance the concerns of the computer networking community in the formation of legislation in this critical area.
- Established a fully staffed, operational headquarters in Cambridge, Massachusetts.
- Distributed the first six issues of our electronic newsletter, EFFector Online, throughout the net.
- Published the first issue of our quarterly print newsletter, EFFECTOR.
- Filed suit against the Secret Service for the unlawful search and seizure of computers, BBS systems, books and manuscripts at Steve Jackson Games in Austin, Texas.
- Defended Craig Neidorf, unjustly accused of publishing purloined documents.

- Become a presence on the Internet with our node, eff.org.
- Created an FTP archive on the net for documents on computer networking and privacy law.
- Spoken to numerous groups nationwide on the issues of civil liberties and computer networking.
- Made grants in aid to Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility as well as joining them in numerous projects and workshops around the nation.
- Testified before the Federal Communications Committee concerning the public access and design needs of the National Research and Education network.
- Lobbied effectively at the state level to change legislation inimical to computer networking.
- Developed a network of relationships with the local and national media that has affected the climate of opinion about computer networking and begun to reverse the slide into "hacker hysteria" that was beginning to grip the nation.
- Given a net home at eff.org to groups like Computer Professionals for Social Responsibility and the new Computers and Academic Freedom group.
- Created a voice that is listened to in Washington on issues concerning computer networking.
- Joined in an association with the ACLU and the Consumer Federation of America in order to plan and to act in the future to ensure broad public access to the information super-highways of the future.
- Launched the Open Road program in order to make sure that the needs of the public in the building of the National Public Network are addressed at the beginning of the project.
- Begun research and development into creating the tools that will allow non-technical individuals using PCs to access the net over voice-grade telephone lines in a simple and straightforward fashion.
- Defined the problems associated with the questions of protecting nodes and carriers from unwarranted risks and liabilities in providing information services from the producer to the consumer.

We are proud that we have been able to accomplish so much in such a short time. We have had a lot of help doing it from friends and supporters from all sectors of American society in the public and the private sectors. In this we have been fortunate.

At the same time, we see more clearly that we did a year ago just how far we have to go and how much work lies ahead of us. The issues that those of us in the computer, telecommunications, and computer networking fields of endeavor can see so clearly now will affect every American and most of the people of the entire world within the next ten years. The opportunities are immense and the potential for an increase in human knowledge, wisdom and well-being beyond our calculation.

We now know that we cannot know all of what lies ahead. Instead, we can try to prepare as best we can, and to protect the legitimate interests of the individual and society as best we can, for the full dawn of the Global Information Age.

We hope that we can count on you for your continuing good will and support.

THE EFF STAFF:

Mitchell Kapor, President and Co-founder (mkapor@eff.org);
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THE EFF BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Jerry Berman, John Perry Barlow, Stewart Brand, Esther Dyson, John Gilmore, Mitchell Kapor, Steve Wozniak.

What can you do?

For starters, you can spread the word about EFF as widely as possible, both on and off the Net. Feel free, for example, to distribute any of the materials included in this or other EFF mailings.

You can become a member of EFF and help us, through your donations to achieve our goals of civilizing the Electronic Frontier.

You can turn some of the immense processing horsepower of your distributed Mind to the task of finding useful new metaphors for community, expression, property, privacy and other realities of the physical world which seem up for grabs in these less tangible regions.

You can try to communicate to technically unsophisticated friends the extent to which their future freedoms and well-being may depend on understanding the broad forms of digital communication, if not necessarily the technical details.

Finally, you can keep in touch with us at any of the addresses listed below. Please pass on your thoughts, concerns, insights, contacts, suggestions, and news. And we will return the favor.

Staying in Touch

Send requests to be added to or dropped from the EFF mailing list or other general correspondence to eff-request@eff.org. We will periodically mail updates on EFF-related activities to this list, as well as mailing our biweekly online newsletter, EFFector Online.

If you receive any USENET newsgroups, your site may carry two newsgroups in the INET distribution called comp.org.eff.news and comp.org.eff.talk. The former is a moderated newsgroup of announcements, responses to announcements, and selected discussion drawn from the unmoderated "talk" group and the mailing list.

Everything that goes out over the EFF mailing list will also be posted in comp.org.eff.news, so if you read the newsgroup you don't need to subscribe to the mailing list.

Postings submitted to the moderated newsgroup may be reprinted by the EFF. To submit a posting, you may send mail to eff@eff.org.

There is an active EFF conference on the Well, as well as many other related conferences of interest to EFF supporters. As of August 1990, access to the Well is \$8/month plus \$3/hour. Outside the S.F. Bay area, telecom access for \$5/hr. is available through CPN. Register online at (415) 332-6106.

A document library containing all of the EFF news releases, John Barlow's "Crime and Puzzlement" and others is available via anonymous FTP from eff.org. Mail ftphelp@eff.org if you have questions, or are unable to use FTP.

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MEMBERSHIP IN THE ELECTRONIC FRONTIER FOUNDATION

In order to continue the work already begun and to expand our efforts and activities into other realms of the electronic frontier, we need the financial support of individuals and organizations.

If you support our goals and our work, you can show that support by becoming a member now. Members receive our quarterly newsletter, *EFFECTOR*, our bi-weekly electronic newsletter, *EFFector Online* (if you have an electronic address that can be reached through the Net), and special releases and other notices

on our activities. But because we believe that support should be freely given, you can receive these things even if you do not elect to become a member.

Your membership/donation is fully tax deductible.

Our memberships are \$20.00 per year for students, \$40.00 per year for regular members. You may, of course, donate more if you wish.

Our privacy policy: The Electronic Frontier Foundation will never, under any circumstances, sell any part of its membership list. We will, from time to time, share this list with other non-profit organizations whose work we determine to be in line with our goals. But with us, member privacy is the default. This means that you must actively grant us permission to share your name with other groups. If you do not grant explicit permission, we assume that you do not wish your membership disclosed to any group for any reason.

>>>— EFF@eff.org MEMBERSHIP FORM —<<<

Mail to: The Electronic Frontier Foundation, Inc.
155 Second St.
Cambridge, MA 02141

I wish to become a member of the EFF I enclose: \$ _____

\$20.00 (student or low income membership)

\$40.00 (regular membership)

[] I enclose an additional donation of \$ _____

Name: _____

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State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: (_____) _____ (optional)

FAX: () _____ (optional)

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Please charge my membership in the amount of \$ _____

to my Mastercard [] Visa [] American Express []

Number: _____

Expiration date: _____

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Date: _____

I hereby grant permission to the EFF to share my name with other non-profit groups from time to time as it deems appropriate [].

Initials: _____

The EFF is a non-profit, 501c3 organization.
Donations to the EFF are tax-deductible.

